

REMARKS

Claims 18 and 19 have been amended to place the claims in better form for allowance.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 7-19 and 37 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Orensteen et al. (US 5508105) in view of Lu (US 5670096).

Each of the claims recite a “surface exposed to the outdoors comprising a radiation cured coating crosslinked by exposure radiation selected from the group consisting of ultraviolet radiation, visible radiation, electron beam radiation and a marking material disposed on the radiation cured coating”.

Orensteen et al. describes a (i.e. multi-function layer) surface exposed to the outdoors and a marking material (i.e. thermally printed indicia) on such surface. The Examiner acknowledges that, Ornsteen et al. fails to disclose a signage article having an exposed radiation cured coating.

Lu et al. discloses a retroreflective article comprising a radiation curable spacing layer. Such radiation cured layer is not exposed to the outdoors.

The Examiner alleges that is would have been obvious “to use Lu’s uv-curable composition as the composition of the surface layer in Orensteen in order to improve the retroreflective luster.”

In response to the Office Action of 5-6-03, Applicant brought to the Examiner’s attention col 10, lines 43-49 of Orensteen et al. states that, “Multi-function layer formed from compositions comprising a polyurethane dispersion and an acrylic emulsion preferably **do not contain a crosslinker**, because urethane/acrylic/crosslinker composition generally do not form multi-function layer that are directly thermally printable with a resin based colorant/binder.”

Accordingly, Orensteen et al. teaches away from crosslinked compositions. Since Orensteen et al. teaches away from crosslinked compositions as the multi-function layer, there is no motivation to employ the radiation curable spacing layer compositions of Lu as the surface layer in Orensteen et al. as alleged by the Examiner.

The Applicant has responded to all the rejections set forth by the Examiner. A timely allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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